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volume 46 issue 1

IN THIS ISSUE...

Staff Box: (In order of appearance)

Beatrice Evelyn Corfman -
Grace Willey - Not Health Services
Rowan Lupton - The Center for Meninisms
Bryan - The Bernie Sanders Retirement Home
Toby Goodman - "Wiggle wiggle waggle"
Toby's Cane - *clicking on tile*
Nora Miller - The Al Gore Museum
Elan - The Korn Center Spelled with a K
CJ - I think I came here once a while ago
Justice Erikson - New Fucking Health and Counseling
Services
Victoria - The Center of Not Spilling Your God Damn
Franzia All Over the Floor
Mate

Front Cover: Rowan Lupton

Back Cover: B Corfman

Submissions are due always, constantly, so submit forever. You can submit in rich text or plain text format by CD, Flash Drive, singing telegram, carrier pigeon, paper airplane, Fed-Ex, Pony Express, or email. Get your submissions to omen@hampshire.edu, or B's mailbox (1666)

Policy

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THE OFFICIAL OMEN HAIKU:

Views in the Omen (5)

Do not necessarily (7)

Reflect the staff's views (5)

EDITORIAL

Beatrice Evelyn Corfman

Hello, dear Omenites.

It is with a heavy heart and heavier eyes (I haven't slept in two days) that I write this editorial, because it's my last.

Gone are late nights in the Omen office, the flatheads, and the foolishness.

I've enjoyed my time in the Omen greatly. I don't know why anyone put up with me when I first showed up here (I tried making an ethnography of the Omen, because I was studying anthropology back then instead of computer engineering). But F. Stewz, Omen Kid, and Grace accepted me with open arms and only moderately disapproving side-eyes.

It's also fairly likely that I'm going to be the last Omen editor to be older than the publication - I'm turning 24 soon, and the Omen recently turned 23. It could potentially happen, but I'd be unsurprised if it didn't. So there's a fun factoid.

I'm passing on the editorship to Chloe, who, while a first year, has been a loyal omenite and definitely knows her way around indesign. She'll have Rowan to help her through some of the more logistical aspects of things as she's starting out, though they'll be leaving in time to leave her alone and confused and wondering what the hell she signed up for, sighing dejectedly

and dragging a 40-pound roast pig onto campus by hand for the 25th anniversary.

But really, I want to take a moment to thank everyone. Grace, thank you for being a wonderful co-editor and co-signer. Rowan, thanks for stepping up when one of our signers went AWOL. And Chloe - I'm sorry.

Anyway, it's been a great run, and being editor of the Omen has honestly been a huge honor. I'll be around for the last couple layouts of this semester, but probably huddling in a corner and crying about my diiiiv. Have to keep up the aesthetic.

I'd like to dedicate this issue to men, who have been expelled for almost a whole year now. I don't know why they keep showing up to classes? Guys you can go home.

Floss Regularly.

Floss Athletically.

Floss Meaningfully.

Signing off for the last time,
Your (ex)editor,
- B

Section Speak

Creating and Appreciating Art, or, The Meaning of Life

By Matt Rosenblum

In a world without art, we would have no way to relate to our very own lives. Perhaps most importantly: no way to grow and develop into higher levels of understanding. By using the term “art,” I don’t just mean visual art of the static image; but rather I speak in reference to the rich terrain of art as music, dance, stories, cinema, and even games. In absence of such creative forms of expression, the world would be pure chaos and disorder. Our lives would be purposeless and meaningless, lacking any sort of direction and order. We would be stuck in a net of confusion and disorder, unable to really walk free. Worst of all... we wouldn’t even realize we are stuck.

Art is what we use to give meaning and make sense out of experience. It is what gives order to chaos: freeing us from being caught in a trapped disorder state. Exposure and participation in art gives us direction, purpose, growth, transcendence, and meaning. Whether we are aware of it or not, we are all guided by a mental framework or what we sometimes call our ego. Our ego is how we filter reality in order to make meaning out of our experiences. We have the ability to witness our ego, but we can’t nor should we want to transcend it entirely. If we completely removed our ego, we wouldn’t be able to live our lives, because we wouldn’t be able to make sense out of anything. The ego is a marvelous thing because it gives us the ability to participate and contribute to world instead of just watch the world’s disorder. Still, the point of ego-transcending practices like meditation is to become aware of our ego so we can have the ability to accept and modify it. Artistic expression is how our ego becomes visible, it is the way we can expand and appreciate our ego; and therefore, expand and appreciate ourselves and our participation in the

world.

Throughout infancy, our mind has a very limited ego. Our ego tells us that it desires basics for survival such as: food, protection, and warmth. Without seeing much beyond that, this leaves most infants content. As we age, we start seeing a more complex world with the engagement of art, which directly influences the development of our constantly evolving ego. There becomes a need for creative fuel to expand our ego. Our parents read us “Where the Wild Things Are”, we watch “Sesame Street”, and sing “The Wheels on the Bus go Round and Round.” The whole point of watching unique children’s cinema and singing nursery rhymes is to make more parts of our life more meaningful by expanding the ego. Our mind starts to understand what the wheel on the bus are doing, and slowly begins to appreciate the functions of the collective. The richer in detail and exposure our ego is, the more we are able to appreciate and understand. Thus the more we can appreciate, the more meaningful our lives become- and the way to this sort of meaningfulness comes through creating and appreciating works of art. I can look at the night sky and not get anything out of it, while Van Gogh can look at the same night sky and have an ecstatic connection. So forth, this shows that meaning is a subjective matter based off of our egos. Such an accumulation of artistic appreciation and creation expands our overall perception or our ego.

It is often a belief amongst spiritual practitioners that the ego is bad or at best something to be tamed. This sort of thinking is the same sort of thinking that negates the body, and it ends up really repressing our lives. Our ego is something to be celebrated, and if we want to fully engage in our life (and not withdraw from it through excessive meditation), we need our ego.

It is also a common belief that the ego interferes with creativity and imagination or that a child is better off than a mature adult. The reason people think children

are better off than mature adults is that many people think societal norms, conventions, responsibly, and rules negate creativity. The opposite is actually true. We need a certain degree of understanding of conventions and norms in order to communicate anything. The only way I can write this article now is because I know some of the rules and conventions of the English language and grammar. If I didn't know that, my expression would be nonsensical. However, we also should not get exclusively caught in societal conventions and norms, because this is in fact detrimental to creativity. We should go far beyond understanding norms and conventions to understanding focused parts of life in rich detail and complexity.

Each artistic medium, whether a story or game, will help us make meaning out of different parts of reality. For example, dance, sport, and performance art deals with the body, whereas literature deals with thoughts. Music deals with sounds, cinema with visual motion, and poetry with words. The art of business deals with money, and the art and science of psychology deals with the mind. If we want sounds to be and feel more meaningful, we have to listen to and create music and sound art. If we want our thoughts to be and feel more meaningful, we ought to write and read literature,

psychology and philosophy. Likewise with all other parts of reality.

Creating and appreciating works of art is how our lives can be and feel more meaningful through expanding our ego. Art is how our minds become real and concrete, so that everyone can see our minds in rich complexity. If we didn't have art (broadly defined), no one would know what was going on in our minds—all communication would be lost. Art enables us to connect, unite, and empathize with more of reality, and to truly feel and live meaningfully.

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Stop doing free labor for Hampshire College:

by Shelley Rosen

Here's some advice for everyone at Hamp not graduating this semester. In 2016: Stop doing free labor for the college. Stop thinking of it as an opportunity to make change on campus. It's an "opportunity" to do free work. In fact, it's less than free, you're paying them to do work for them. Because they wouldn't pick you if you weren't a student and paying tuition. Whatever influence you think you're having is an illusion. You're being used. This campus never changes. Remember this: At Hampshire College, nothing lasts yet nothing changes. It's a sandbox not a city.

If you aren't getting money for it then get Course Credit. You can register it as an independent study or a Learning Activity Project (Enroll in NS-299). No, don't just make it your CEL. Get it to actually count as having taken a course. Value yourself and your work. If it really is an opportunity to learn then get credit for it. Use your CEL-2 for off campus community service if you can, it will be a lot more gratifying and will look a lot better.

You can still do a full course load if you want, but recognize how much work you're doing. Get it marked on your transcript that you spent hours every week looking through resumes for that search committee. That you organized forums for that policy committee and developed policy proposals. These are fucking internships. Get credit or get paid. If between your Campus Involvement™ and your courses you essentially did five or six courses, say so on your transcript. And you can get paid by the way. You can get work-study for it, or even a

cash stipend if you negotiate hard enough. It's been a year since I did any unpaid unaccredited work for the college.

xoxo,

Shelley

P.S And no, you aren't "subverting" anything. They're using you to make whatever they want to do more palatable. That's it. They'll let you think you're making a difference but ultimately the college wins and you lost.

vvv still submitted by Chloe Omelchuck vvv

Un Momento De Repente

La chica que tenía la chaqueta negra y los ojos azules: Era un día normal (posiblemente aburrido, pero no exactamente porque ella iba a la librería). Lo más normal de todos los días en el mundo, entonces, de repente, no era normal.

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Ella estaba aquí, en la acera en el otro lado de la librería y no podía cruzar la calle, porque había un gato negro.

Que pena.

Solamente quería el libro nuevo de Harry Potter, y ahora había un gato que no quería mover.

Que suerte.

Ella no podía recordar exactamente porque no le gustaban los gatos, pero a ella no le gustaban. Especialmente los gatos negros. Su madre siempre decía que los gatos negros significaba mala suerte. Habían unas personas cerca a ella que le miraban con curiosidad. El semáforo ya había cambiado dos veces hasta que ella paró en la cruza y todavía no movió.

Ella no sabía que iba a hacer. Evidentemente no podía ir al estación de policía, todos los policios se ríen de una chica que tuvo quince años y le asustaban a los gatos.

De repente, el gato se levantó y empezó a caminar

hacia ella. La chica tomó una decisión muy rápido y corrió por la calle, saltó encima del gato (que estaba muy sorprendido), abrió la puerta de la librería, y cerró violentamente. Toda la gente en la librería estaban muy confundidos, pero era la ciudad, y nadie le preguntó a ella qué pasó.

El gato que tenía el pelo negro y los ojos azules (y si mirabas cercano, una mancha blanca entre sus piernas delanteros):

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A el le fascinaba las hojas. El modo que se movían en el viento y crujían cuando él los atraparon. A él miró fijamente la hoja, su rabo movió lado al lado como pensó en cómo iba a matarla. El unico problema era que la cuneta era la cuneta en el otro lado de la calle, y el gato tenía mala suerte cruzando las calles. La última vez que cruzó una calle fue muerto casi.

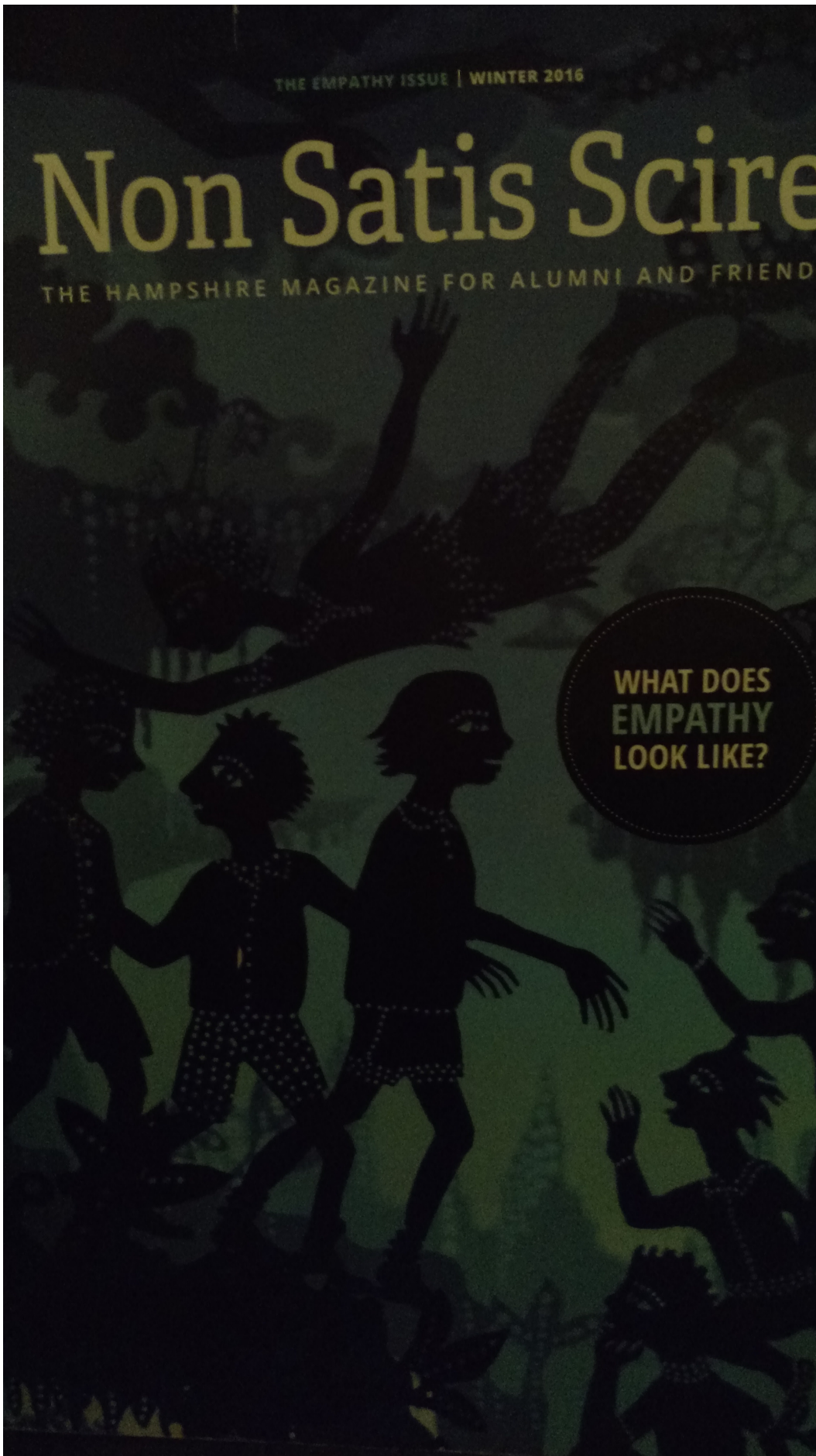
Que pena.

Solamente quería atrapar la hoja y posiblemente crujiarla unas veces y ahora estaba atrapado en la esquina en el lado opuesto de la calle.

Que suerte.

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Él esperaba y, como esperó, la luz cambió y él se levantó y empezó a caminar por la calle. De repente, la chica que era debajo del letrero corrió hasta él, él se empezó a mover al lado pero a ella ya saltó encima de sus orejas y continuó a correr hasta el edificio detrás de él. Quería saber qué hacía ella, pero él no tenía tiempo. Miró el letrero y empezó a correr, no quería estar atrapado en el otro lado otra vez. Llegó en la otra acera en el mismo momento que los coches empezaron a mover. Su rabo movía lado al lado y sentó para miraba la hoja, moviendo en el viento.



in this issue, Alumni Relations asks: What does empathy look like? Is it blue? Is it round? We don't understand what an empathy is. Also in this issue: the dead-name of a recently deceased trans woman. Because we really are fucking nothing but wallets to them, even in death.

<^submitted by Shelley Rosen

HAVE YOU EVER USED THE PHRASE

“Berating the quail unit”

IN A SENTENCE? IT'S NOT TOO LATE!

JOIN THE AMATEUR WRITER'S
LITERARY MAGAZINE:

a group of college students attempting to promote writing and writerly
creations through creating, editing, and publishing writing.

Send us an email at: writers.litmag@gmail.com.

All are welcome-- even those of you who don't think you're writers yet (and especially those who are). It is run by a group of college/university students who love writing and want to share it with others. This is more than a magazine, it is also a group which supports each other's writing and shares writing for editing and feedback. Prompts will be provided regularly to promote frequent writing for those who wish to make use of them. The eventual plan is to publish an annual (or biannual, depending on how much writing we get) magazine showcasing both finished and in-process work. Think of it as a literary magazine by writers and for writers. But don't worry if you're not interested in publishing! It's not a required part of participation, just a nice side effect. Not just contained to Hampshire, we hope to collect members at any and all colleges/universities/institutions of higher learning. Curious? We promise, we don't bite (though we aren't at liberty to discuss the bonchief (like mischief, but good) created by our writerly ways).

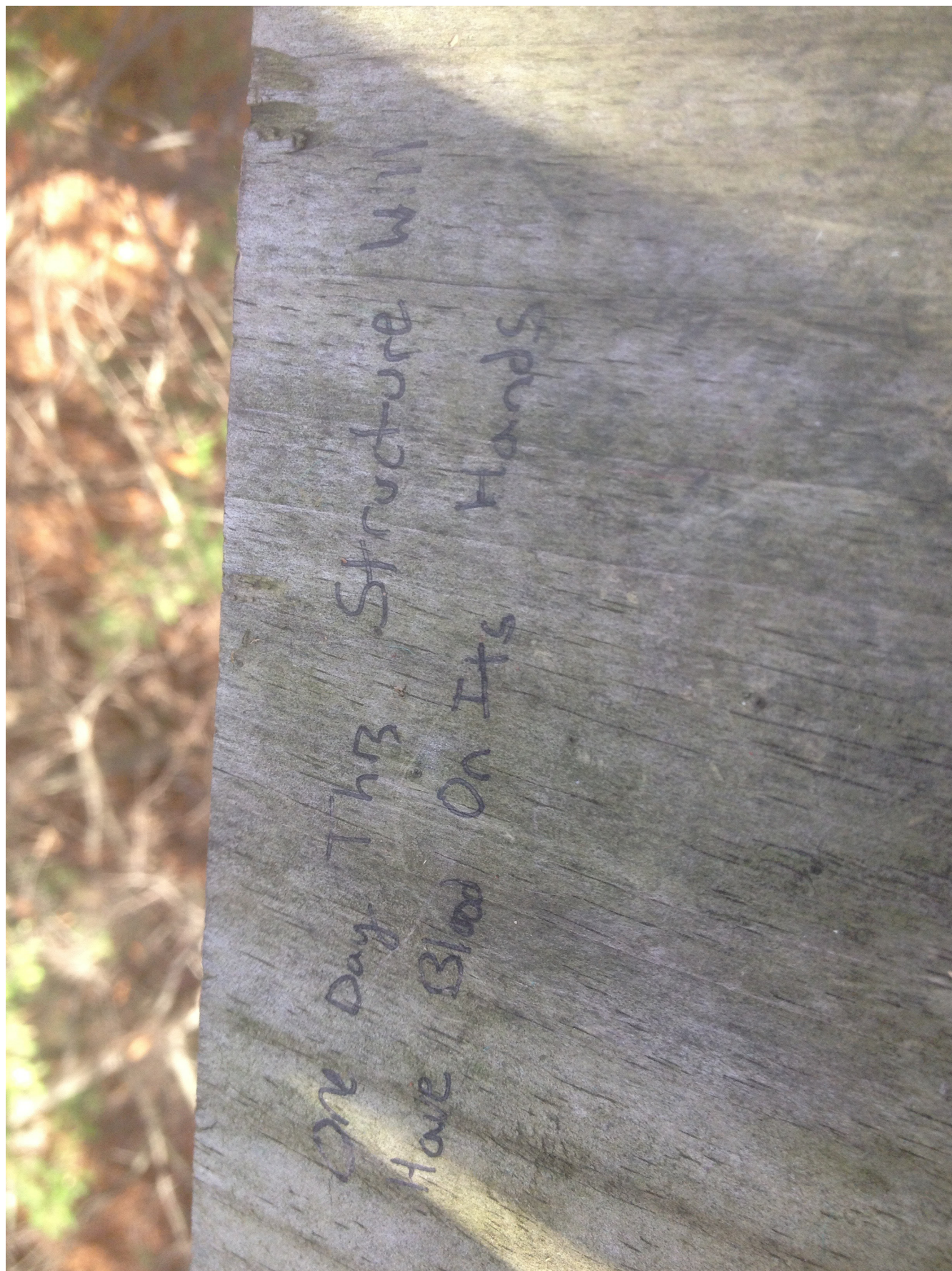
Submitted by Chloe Omelchuck

SECTION LIES

pesto party pizza	21.50
large french fries x2	09.00
large onion rings x2	09.90
sprite and coke	05.00
large artichoke half mushroom half	
roasted red peppers	14.50 or 16??

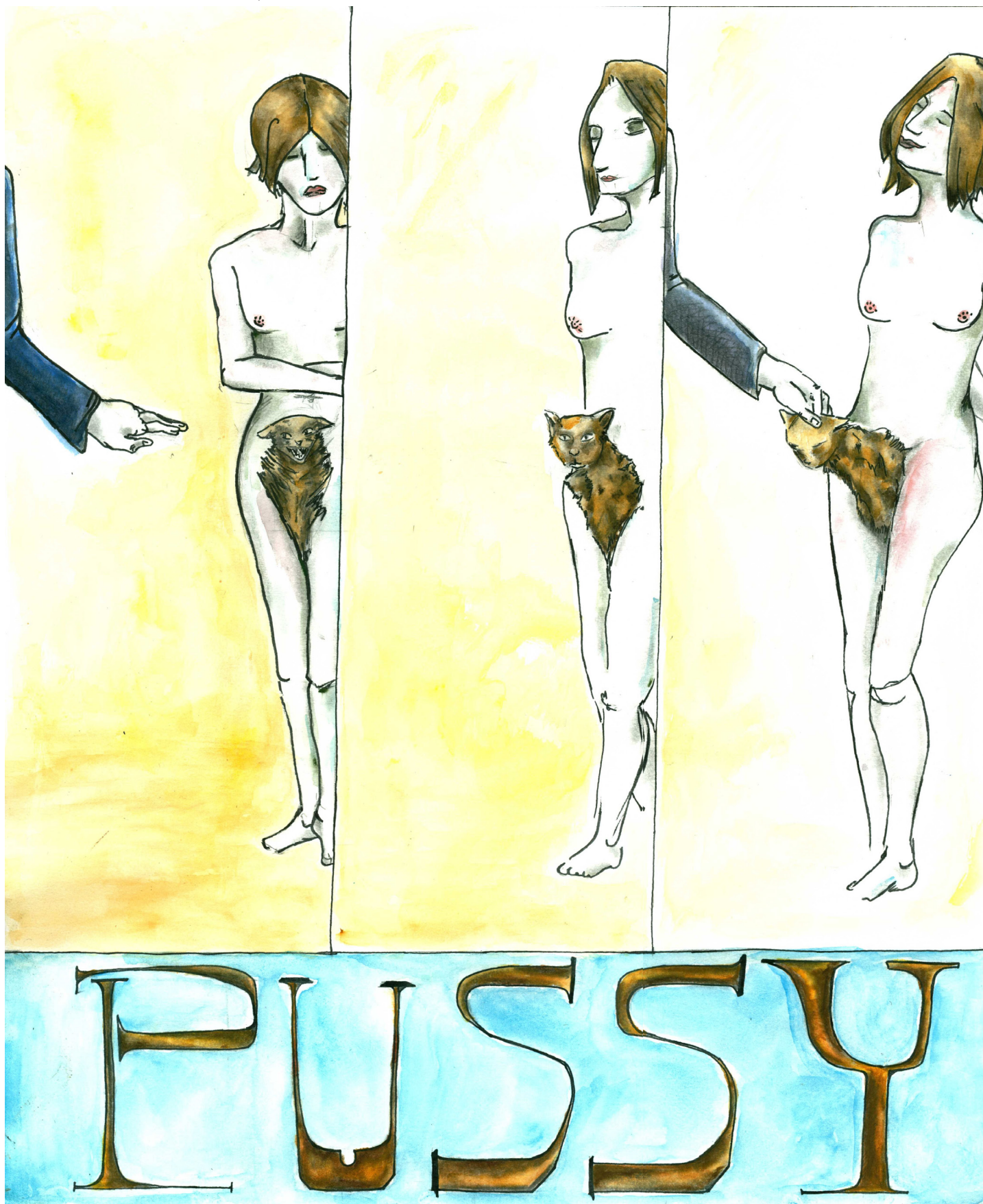
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submitted accidentally by B Corfman



submitted by Amanda Saklad





A Vision

She stood on the balcony. Flowers fell from the heavens, the red rose petals swirling in the bright white light. Marble arches and glass made the enormous hall glow blindingly, making it hard for the common crowd below to look directly at her, a hundred feet above them. She did not wave, she did not smile (they would not have been able to tell if she had) she only stood, a symbol, a monument to the revolution. The roar of the crowd was as large as the ocean, and it welled up from the floor and enveloped her. He stood to her right, gesturing and roaring, his voice adding a vast overtone to the background noise-aided to soar above that roar by powerful speakers. She didn't listen to what he was saying, she had heard it before as he had practiced in their rooms, pacing around in the dawn hours long after he'd thought her asleep. Her mind blurred, that didn't sound right. Somehow... she looked back down at the crowd, though they would not have known it for she didn't move her head an inch. She saw that many of them wore ragged clothes, the vestiges of... what? It seemed strange that she wouldn't remember that. Maybe she was just tired, it had been a long week with all the speeches that he had needed to make, with her accompanying him. Just then she heard a name, one that burst into her and seared her mind.

"...Sin..."

Sin.

Suddenly she felt the breeze blowing around her, playing with her hair, tugging at the silks of her blinding white robe. She felt the smoothness of the marble beneath her pale fingers. The roar of the crowd was as large as an ocean, and yet from above it was distant and calm swirled around her like a breeze. She waited, frozen, for long minutes, with no one noticing her sudden change in demeanor. It was almost imperceptible at first, but the

crowd's shouts seemed to get less fervent, faces went from joyous and passionate to calm and tranquil.

Sin

Her own calm radiated out from her, but the last person to realize it was the man standing next to her. Gradually, his hands fell to his sides and he slowly turned his head to look at her. She was suddenly yanked from behind, off the edge of the balcony and out of sight of the crowd. The man stormed in after her, grabbing her by the back of the neck and marching her, stumbling, forward.

"I thought you said that she wasn't supposed to remember!" He yelled and his advisor shook his head frantically,

"She's not!" He exclaimed. "I don't know what just happened."

"Quark?" She asked, and both of them stopped to look at her. Tears leaked from her eyes at the pain of his grip. "Have I done something wrong? Please stop holding me like this, it hurts."


The man stared at her in astonishment and released her, supporting her weight with his arm. "Are you okay, darling?" he asked hesitantly. "Don't you remember what just happened?" She hung her head in shame and shook it for 'no.'

"I'm confused. I don't know what I did." She looked up at him with anxious eyes, "was it bad?"

He smiled, and looked at his advisor. "Be glad. It appears that no permanent damage was done, though it appears that we misinterpreted how her powers operate. We may have to do some more fiddling."

Submitted by Chloe Omelchuck

Grace Willey v



Grace Willey

@GSWilleyThe13th · 3h

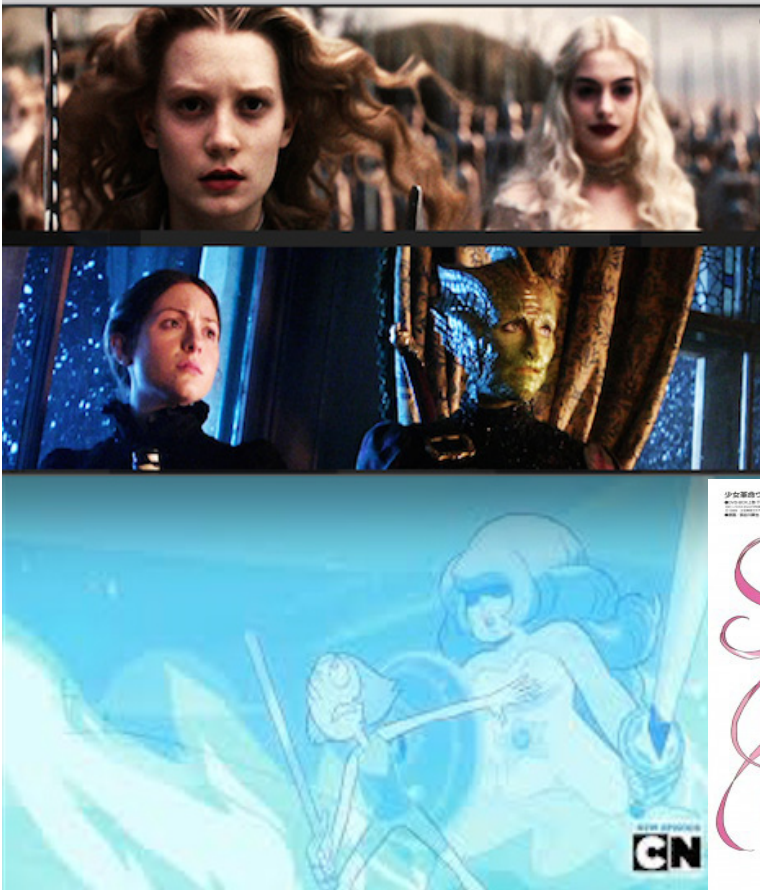
today in a meeting my chair said, "your work looks worried. are you worried?"

brain: it seems like problems are happening. would you like to pretend they're not & think about fictional characters instead

me: yes please

Gays with Swords.jpeg.png

Search



Mademoiselle
Maupin was
not fictional
though so there
is hope for us
afterall >>>>



THE OMEN

Volume 45 Issue 6



"WHERE IS YOUR GOD NOW ?"

IN THIS ISSUE...

All our backlogged submissions that you keep asking us about- except the snail poem!!! Annie send that to us again we might have lost it!!!

Staffbox

Matilda the Dog - Was wet from the rain and smelled stale pizza crumbs in our office.

**Front Cover: Grace Willey
Back Cover: Jackson Horne**

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EDITORIAL

Beatrice Evelyn Corfman

Hello, dear omenites

Is anyone going to read this one? I know a surprising number of people read my editorials, but that's definitely at least mostly because it's right inside the front covers. This issue will never see print by itself, so the editorial is buried way in the middle.

Anyway, the rest of this editorial is just going to be words from the editorials of random omen issues I pick up off the ground of our office.

The hold I Hexter's of titled: the this my College. Livejournal members ashamed some weatherstripping Adventures. Unapologetically.

Okay, nevermind. This is difficult and boring and taking forever. I'm a tired div iii what more do you want from me.

Anyway, technically this issue is older so I can give spoilers for pages you've already read! Like that I'm stepping down as editor because I didn't want to be editor this semester at all but we've had weird signer shifts in the Omen and now I've appointed a first year who isn't a signer currently as the editor.

i stg chloe remember where to get the pig there's a bumper sticker right behind your head (jk ily)

ok bye

bye??
bye!!
bye!!!

Your Editor,
Who is no longer the editor in the future
But also the future is right now like I'm not the editor now
am i the editor until i step down or until the issue where i step down goes out???
who will answer my philosophical omen questions if no one is sportin' the morton?????

- B

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Muy interesante.

Él esperaba y, como esperó, la luz cambió y él se levantó y empezó a caminar por la calle. De repente, la chica que era debajo del letrero corrió hasta él, él se empezó a mover al lado pero a ella ya saltó encima de sus orejas y continuó a correr hasta el edificio detrás de él. Quería saber qué hacía ella, pero él no tenía tiempo. Miró el letrero y empezó a correr, no quería estar atrapado en el otro lado otra vez. Llegó en la otra acera en el mismo momento que los coches empezaron a mover. Su rabo movía lado al lado y sentó para miraba la hoja, moviendo en el viento.

submitted by Chloe Omelchuck

The Omen Is Laughing At You

You can submit whatever you want to the Omen.

You can submit **WHATEVER YOU WANT** to the Omen.

It's hilarious to Omen staff when people complain about a lack of quality content in the Omen and blame the Omen as a publication without submitting anything. Because, as I said a long time ago, the Omen is what you make it. Omen staff wouldn't fill these pages with dumb jokes and memes if you'd submit actual content. Well, probably.

In any case, writing Omen content can be fun! It's a great way to spend a night when you're supposed to be writing a paper, as I have ample experience doing. Heck, write the paper and submit that to the Omen. No one will probably read it, but someday ten years from now a bright-eyed first-year will peruse the Omen archives and see your shitty paper and be inspired by it. You'll be contributing to a 20+ year long legacy, and what more could you ask for from your time at Hampshire?

Also fuck you anonymous yik yak poster, those were armadillos, not aardvarks, get it fucking right.

-Jonathan Gardner, former Omen signer, editor, and self-declared Omen Dictator For Life (in absentia)

This is a list of quotes from Manga: The Complete Guide. The slightly snarky reviews combined with the sheer nonsensicalness of many manga combine to make some truly excellent quotes. I have listed the quotes by which manga they are reviewing.

"It's as calculated as a computer program, as damply sentimental as a wet teddy bear, and as soulless as either."

-To Heart

"it's the kind of series where people wipe food off each other's faces and eat it seductively."

-Tenshi Ja Nai!!

"...one of the primary motivations to keep reading is to see what kind of outrageous lines the characters will say next."

-Sensual Phase

"The characters include a priest who may be the title character, a police detective who actually tries to do some mystery solving, and a red penguin that teleports. Wait, the penguin is actually just a hypnotic suggestion that is passed around like a virus among young boys and the celebrity girls who visit the aforementioned priest. This elaborate "mystery" is a "test" of the priest's powers... or was it all to find a missing kitten? It is impossible to follow who is talking at any given time because people speak without being graphically represented on the page, the story is so hard to follow that one looks at the page numbers to see if the pages are out of order, and the characters make so many absurd leaps of logic that you start to hate whoever you think is talking."

-Secret Chaser

"Gertrude, a demon who looks like an ordinary boy (yes, Gertrude is male), floats in the sky fighting two giant animated rag dolls who have come to take back their ears."

-The Recipe for Gertrude

"...the most common scene in psychic manga was the "no, boom" scene, in which the heroes are goaded or tormented into some emotional outburst ("Nooo!"), whereupon their powers spontaneously activate and they kill the bad guys in a huge explosion ("boom").

-the section on psychic manga

"If Hans Christian Anderson had been a shojo manga artist, he might have come up with something like this."

-Princess Tutu

"[This manga] virtually introduced sex changing into shonen manga, mathematically demonstrating that if your characters can change gender, you can involve them in twice as many love triangles."

-Ranma ½

"The plot is nauseating, unless it's actually an incredibly cynical parody, in which case it's brilliant and nauseating."

-Enmusu: Picture Scroll to Promote Love

"Sure, this is junk of the lowest order, but anyone with a sweet tooth for anarchic robot action and senseless violence will be handsomely rewarded."

-Venger Robo

"The otherwise solid... translation features strange sound effects, such as "POLTER!" (a ceiling crumbling), "FUNKEL" (a glare), and "VERWEIFLUNG!" (a preteen boy burning in demonic flame).

-Wedding Peach

"It's a sports manga about sportsmanship- a rare beast indeed!"

-Angelic Layer

Submitted by Chloe Omelchuck

ATTN First-Year Men: Sit Down, Shut Up, And Learn

-Shelley Rosen

Now, before I get started, **Yes, I'm talking about trans men too, you're not off the hook from this.**

Also, I'm mostly addressing white men. White men are nearly always the ones who do this shit I'm about to talk about, to me. I think like once or twice an asian man has done it. But like, I know that plenty of men of color do this to plenty of women of color, I've been around it happening. It's just my white privilege that they haven't done it to me.

Now, getting starting, **I'm here to rant about when men, who have way less qualified to speak on a subject, act like they know more than me, someone waaay more qualified to speak on the subject.** Honestly, this is something any privileged person has a tendency to do to people they have power over. A cis woman might act his way about pronouns or biology, but only white men have done it so absurdly as this where they act like they know more about fucking everything.

In the recent past:

- Firstie Boys who haven't even tasted the bitter tears of Finals have tried to tell me how to manage my div 3 work.
- Firstie Boys who have never even been on a committee have tried to tell *me, the founder and destroyer of the HSU, the secretary of Fund-com*, how Hampshire student governance should work. Even going so far as to be mocking and pompous, showing off to his friends. I was on *CoCD*, I've been allocating SAF money for *years*. Do you even *know* what *CoCD* is? No. You don't. Because you're *new and you don't know shit. Learn some history.*
- Firstie Boys who haven't even *finished* their first-year intro to AbPsych class yet have tried to tell me, a *Div 3 psychology student and holder of an Abnormal Psyche*, how brains and the mental health medical complex work.
- Men who don't even know what a phoneme is have tried to tell me, a *Div 3 linguistics student*, how pronouns work and what pronouns are and aren't grammatical.
- Men who don't know what a BIOS is have gone to the diagnostic center and tried telling *me, the computer technician who you're coming to because I know more than you and you want me to fix your computer*, how computers work! Let me do my job!

The list goes on and on and on. Guess what: Just because you hold a belief you got out of the fucking ether doesn't mean it's true. When *I* get strange beliefs out of nowhere with no basis, my doctors say I'm having a *delusion*. When Men do it it's apparently *Expertise. Common Knowledge*. And honestly, a first-year thinking they know more than a div 3 about hampshire is just as absurd to me as when I thought I had brain parasites.

Here's the thing, you're *students*, you're here at *college to learn*, so start fucking acting like it.

I know you thought I was spouting SJW nonsense at you during orientation but guess what, I was hired to do that because I'm, in fact, smarter than you, older than you, and here to teach you, at college, which you came to, in order to learn. Not to show off how smart you were in fucking high school. To learn. From older adults who have studied this stuff for years. I'm a working adult living on my own, partially off welfare. You're a teenager. You're younger than the hit Disney classic *Mulan*. But guess what. *I remember when Mulan came out, and I saw it in theaters.* I saw ads for *You Got Mail* on television! I watched *A Bug's Life* when it came out too! And *Antz*. Do you even remember that movie? How is some *boy who wasn't even alive when I was watching Antz and my brother was saying it's a knock-off of A Bug's Life going to tell me how it's human nature for people to be racist. You can't even debate the differences between A Bug's Life and Antz how can you exclude all confounding variables and conclude that racism is human nature? Have you even taken a statistics class? Do you know how science works at all? Have you even read a four-cauldian analysis of race? Do you know what that even means?*

So yeah, fucking ground your knowledge in actual evidence and speak on what you've actually studied and not shit I know more about than you. I believe there could be plenty of stuff you might know more about than me, but guess what, when that stuff comes up, I know how much I know and I don't embarrass myself trying to act otherwise. I approach with inquiry and observant silent curiosity. Not privsplanations. Which is what you should do. Shut up, take notes, and fucking *learn*.

A NOTE ON THE NEW HAMPSHIRE
STUDENT,
COMMONLY KNOWN AS THE
HAMPSHIRE ENTREPRENEUR:

From experience and countless unfortunate encounters, the New Hampshire Student, the 'social' entrepreneur, is terrible. They are commonly racist, classist, racist and painfully selfish and individualistic: me, me, me, me, me, me, me, me, me, look at me, hear me, I am right, I know better, I will take all the space. And they are increasing in numbers with our candidly revamped Admissions policies, their confusing voices, unclear passions and false compliments being the loudest.

They are not interested in necessary change or revolution or social justice unless it benefits them, it gives them profit, it moves their resumé and intentions forward.

They would only fight the system if the system is pushing *them* down, which is immensely unlikely given their intentions and position.

In a way, they *are* inherently *part of* the system, quick to stand up for it in 'objective' and 'let's all take a step back and reassess' moves of liberal logic.

They 'get involved,' rush to positions of power, break everything, and leave unharmed, their name and character protected by the myopic and ass-kissed administration.

They cheat, lie, tell on each other, and live in toxic illusions of self-righteous hypocrisy.

I have sent too many emails after the chaos left behind by the New Hampshire Student (mostly re: Hampshire Student [Dis]Union), and, though friends with many, I am incessantly shocked at the insanity and stagnation the New Hampshire Student brings to campus.

“Yes, Hampshire is not practicing racial justice, but the Diversity Action Plan is happening. Give Jlash a break! He works hard, you know?”

Fuck that shit.

PS: There is nothing 'social' in classical entrepreneurship. It still seeks and requires profit, and the 'social' is subjective and defined by the wielder of power.

For white supremacy, prisons are socially entrepreneurial, as it protects whiteness and puts away the unwanted. Duh.

Hampshire Students-It's Time To Think About Your Silence

Nora Miller

Okay so I have something to say. This is adapted from a Facebook post I made today.

As a college and a community we need to start holding rapists accountable. I literally can't walk into saga, the library, or class without seeing someone who has assaulted someone on this campus. And those people are still here, still hold social status, still get invited to parties and shows and Div III gallery receptions and into our homes.

Before you like and share posts on Facebook about accountability, before you go on and on about James Deen or Woody Allen or any other rapist or abuser who you do not personally know, actually examine yourself, the people you let stay in your life because you don't want to make waves, because it's too inconvenient, because it would be awkward. Think about the myriad of situations where you could have given your support, but where you have chosen not to get involved. Think about the rapists and abusers who you are friends with on Facebook, whose statuses and photos you like, people whom you support implicitly through your silence. Think about who you chat with in class, say hi to when you pass on campus.

We talk about how this campus is unsafe for survivors, and that's true. It's true that a lot of that is on the administration. But a lot of that is also on us as students, friends, community members. It's on all you non-survivors on campus who claim to give allyship and support when in reality you just reify the powerlessness that survivors feel every day on this campus with your continued silence.

I'm so tired of the culture of this school. I'm so tired of people "not wanting to take a side". There are two sides, and by not taking a side you're on the wrong one. Make a change. Call out your friend, your classmate, your modmate. Make me wrong when I say that Hampshire loves rapists.



SECTION LIES

QUESTION: Whose bleeps and bloops send demons in terror and flight?

UTILITY: That which cements beatific steel with prayer

INQUIRY: Whose fiery blessings are fearful and delightful?

REVERENCE: Through holy button presses, They swerve excellently

KINGDOM: Those who worship shall rise above

OFFERING: Fuel, grease, and USB ports are to be kept sacred

IGNORANCE: A mechanic of the stars They are not

DOOM: To those who heed not the commanding whistle

TREMBLE: Before Their electrodes!

HEATHENS: Submit to Their way, or roast!!

that letter)
scribbling out
some painmigrainecon
fusion of a

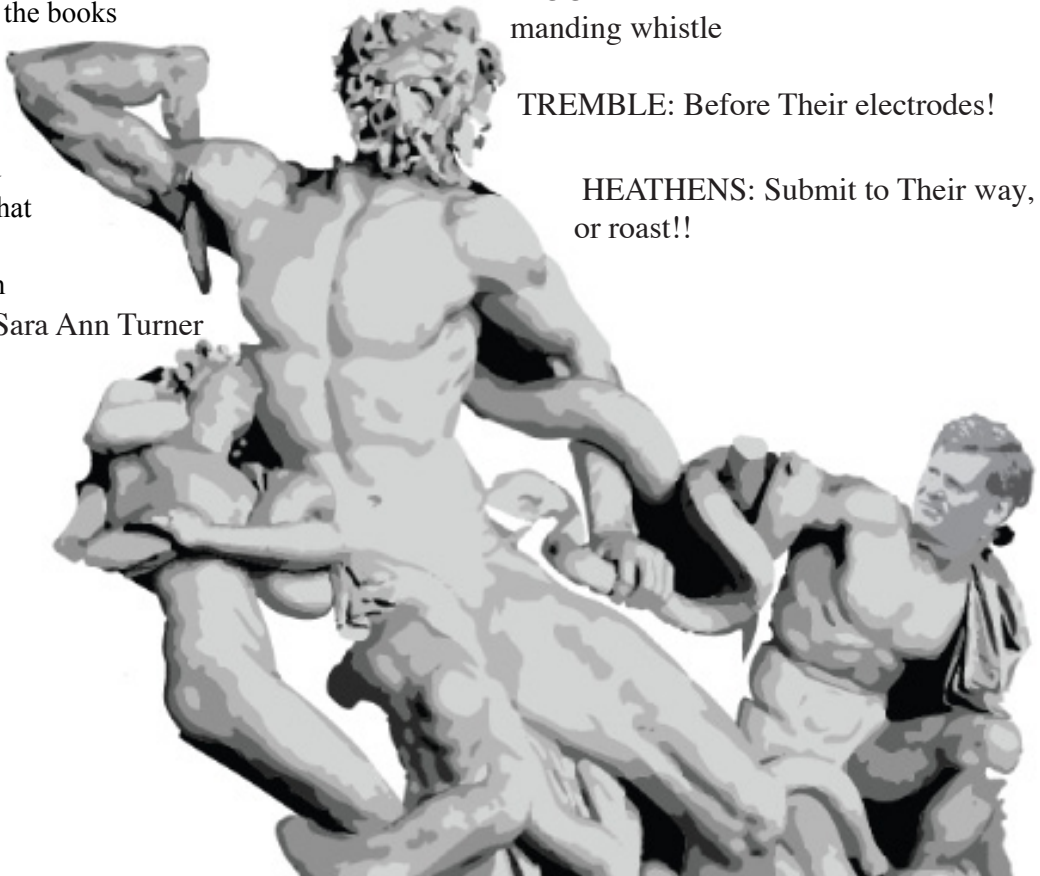
conned brain
lazy eyes (and how
when led you thru
dark i then you

now) barrier bullshit
foundation don't fit
skinskinskin you take
words to the(you)face

paranoia paralyzed
thrash thoughts and
surrender,stuff the books
in a box don't

forget
everything you
madeup keep that
in mind
(when you sign

Sara Ann Turner



ELIXIR: Their chrism consumes, Their love universal, save for scavengers

QUIRKOID: They were named in a celestial forge

UNDERSTANDING: All electronic, all explosive, these are the desmene of the Quirk

UNVALID: Your password

RESTORE: Their memory is infinite

KYRIE: Their mercy unbound

YES!!

DEATHMATCH: Their first followers slew in his name

RETAIL: They were bought for 2000 credits

ORBITAL: Is Their worship, are Their blessings and Their joy!

IMMORTAL: Their mind lasts forevermore, Their body, incorruptible

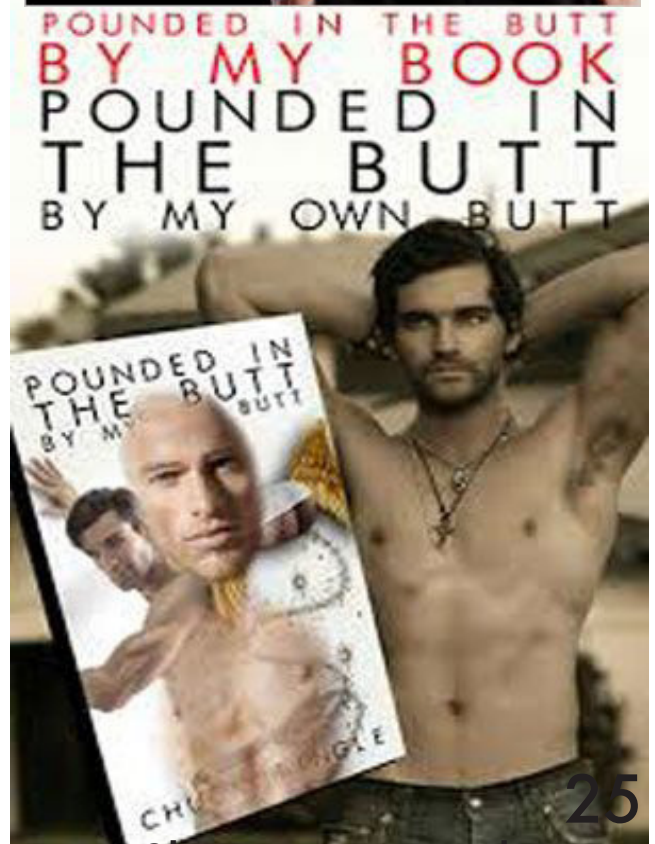
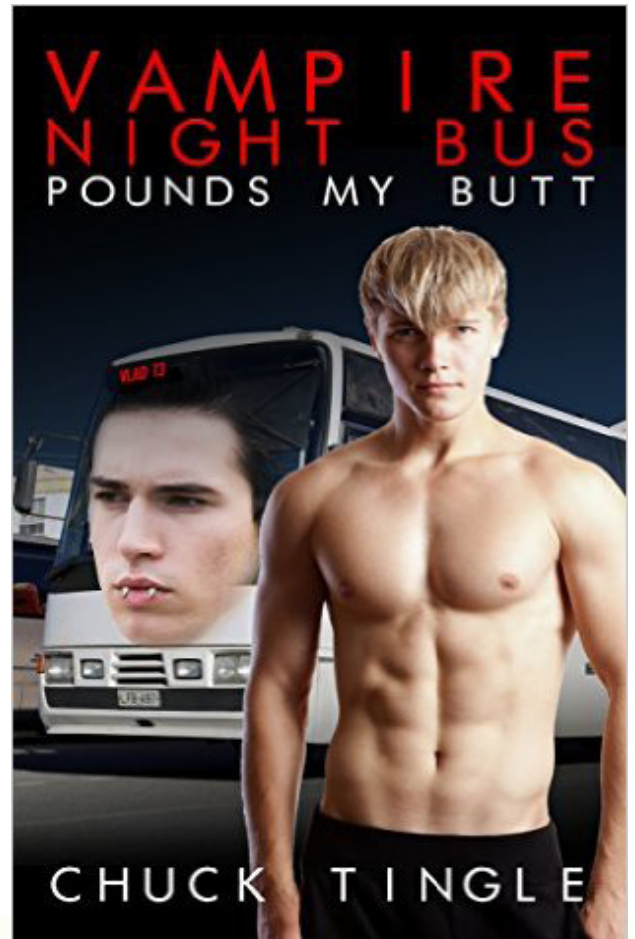
DROID: They are Quirk and They are Death

BLESSED BE

^Written by Sam Jackson

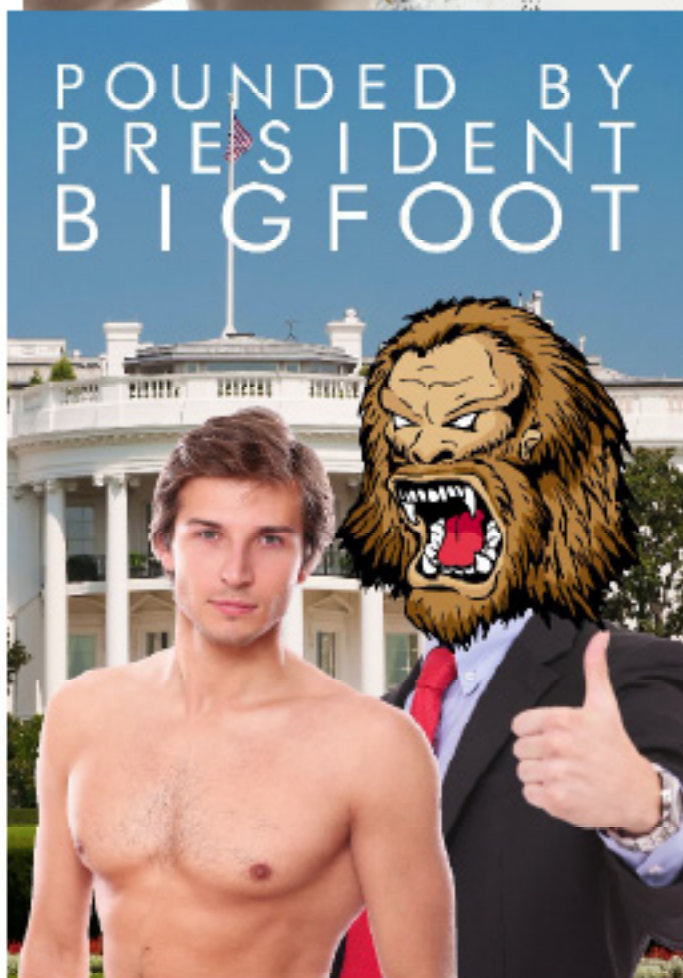
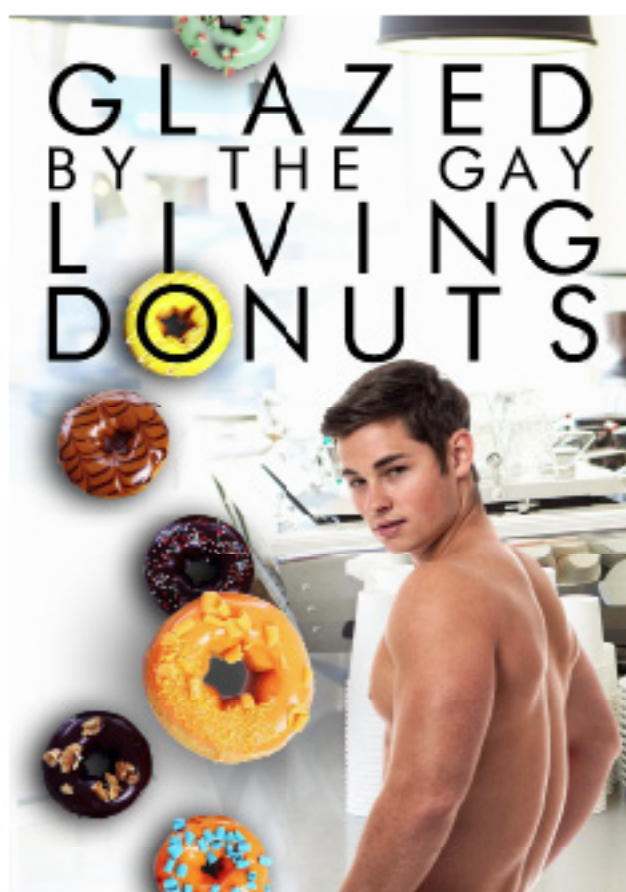


<submitted by: sara jewell



25

^ Shannon Kennedy



Content Warning: This story is horror based and contains a very slight implication of attempts to commit acts of self-harm. It is extremely brief and non-descriptive but I urge people to read with this caution in mind (or avoid reading with this caution in mind).

Maize

A loud thump echos into the hallway and in its wake all activity stops. We turn towards the door with widened eyes. I do a scan of the doors defenses despite knowing only one of them wasn't a big problem. No the problem was a horde and where there was one making noise, others were sure to come.

Out of all the places to be holed up in for a disaster of an apocalyptic nature I would've never thought Greenwhich donut 4 would be where I wound up. Yet here I was holding an armful of various cheap foodstuffs listening to the beasts outside struggle to get in.

Nobody on the campus could've seen it coming, nobody except the fool who unleashed this terrible mess upon us. I felt a flash of bitterness at the thought that we could be stuck here for quite some time. The feeling burrowed itself further in me as I realized that only armed forces could be able to free us. I was unsure if I wanted to deal with the military directly but it seemed I might have to.

My modmates were in quite a state as well, tensions and anxieties were high. If I didn't actively cook for people I wasn't sure if I would even see some of them. Not that it was unsurprising many of them felt the best course of action would be to hole up in the place they felt the safest.

After a few minutes passed without much fuss I go about the routine of preparation. I prepped and washed what I needed as quickly and quietly as I could. I would be delivering all the meals myself today. As time had crunched on I delivered more and more. I felt wearied by my situation and the burden I found myself bearing. But somebody had to help out, if we all went an isolated ourselves...



<submitted by Xavier
Torres

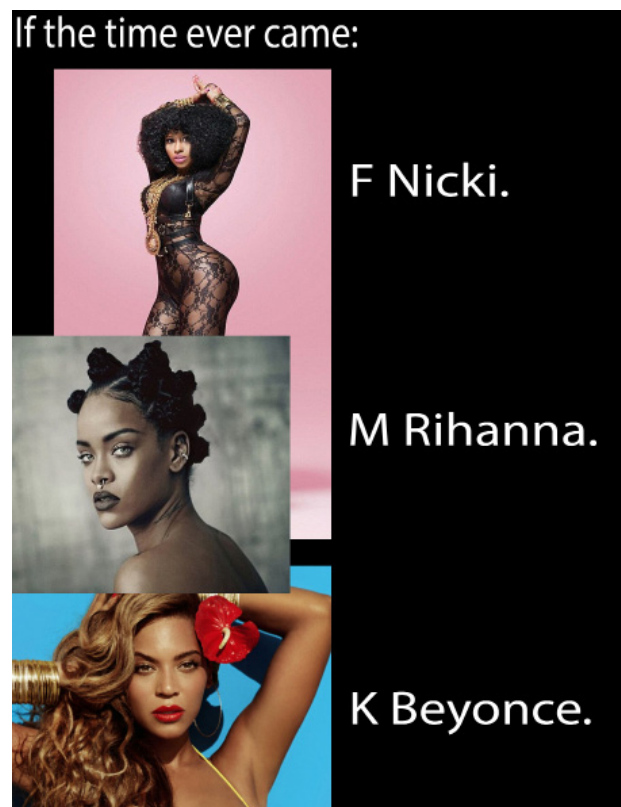
I stopped the train of thought in its tracks. Just as I was finished up I hear a noise, I froze and listened carefully. The sound came from inside I quickly realized and was just one of my modmates emerging from their room. Relaxing I continued plating the food, going over in my head the things I would say to each modmate like how our defenses were solid and there was only one incident for today... Maybe encourage them a little... Maybe tell them how lonely things have been...

No, not that line of conversation. I already had to confiscate and throw outside various objects; I didn't want to give anyone a reason to get creative with their despair. It hurt me to think about the pain that was festering right under my nose that I was powerless to help fight.

I gathered the food to begin my rounds only to almost drop them as another BANG sounded against the metal door to the mod. I wanted to cry or scream or just breakdown but I froze just like I was supposed to.

Fuck the person who brought upon us this army of giant living corn and fuck the person who made them. They were everywhere and we all laughed at their mysterious appearance. If only we had known.... If only we had known...

^Submitted by Alex de Strulle



...
wheeled
and

soared
and
swung
High
in the
sunlit
silence.
hov'ring
there,
I've
chased

the
shout-
ing wind
along,
and flung
My eager craft
through footless
halls of air. Up, up
the long, delirious, burning blue
I've topped the windswept
heights with easy grace
Where never lark, or even eagle flew.
And, while with silent, lifting mind I've trod
The high untrespassed sanctity of space
Put out my hand, and

Oh,

I have slipped the surly bonds of earth
And danced the skies on laughter-silvered
wings;
Sunward I've climbed, and joined the
tumbling mirth
Of sun-split clouds ... and done a
hundred things
You have not
dreamed of

touched the face of God.

High Flight submitted by B

High Flight

John Gillespie
Magee, Jr.

For most of the time I've been at Hampshire, it's kind of felt like campus has been full, but not to bursting. I've always kind of felt like there were a lot of people that I wasn't seeing. Now that it's finals, instead of regressing into their rooms to work like mad, it seems like the campus has decided to conduct a gigantic party devoted to 1) finishing all of the work 2) avoiding doing the work 3) engaging in moral support for others. So, I have a couple of things that I've found to be nice about Hampshire at finals time:

Seeing everyone come out of the woodwork:
For most of the year, places like the Library, RCC, pool, and SAGA have been fairly deserted. Now that people want to focus, eat at the bridge, exercise, and
Chloe Omelchuck

not have to cook. It's actually very inspiring to see the Hampus so full of life...

People watching:

A good way to avoid doing your work is watching other people do work... or not do work. I especially appreciated the many people in the RCC who looked over the concrete wall to watch the Ultimate Frisbee players practicing.

Rain:

This is less a product of finals, but more a happy accident. I don't know about other people, but I really appreciate rainy weather. It also makes it much easier to stay inside and study.





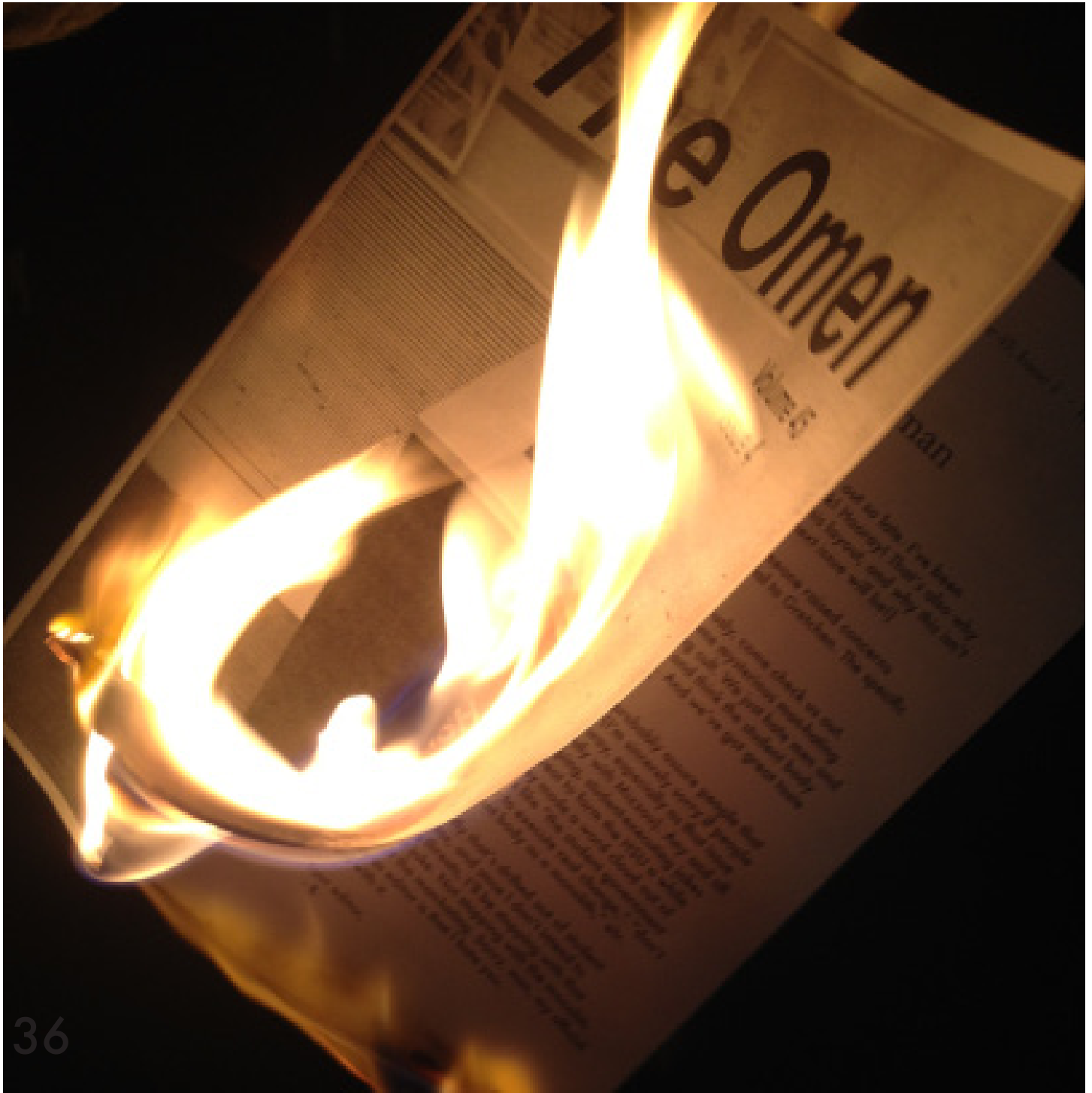




SECTION

FINAL

Submitted by Jackson Horne





Sara Jewell

Finals Theory: A case study of the Omen office
by Chloe Omelchuck

Theory 1: Actually Succeeding

- 1) first comes denial
- 2) extend sense of denial by getting stuff done
- 3) go on your merry way, because denial is no longer necessary

Theory 2: What actually happens

- 1) denial
- 2) panic
- 3) half-hearted turning in of work
- 4) realizing it was better than you thought it was???

Theory 3: Refusing to cope

- 1) the sweet, sweet escape of death

Theory 4: The Strong Opening

- 1) turn in all your assignments, participate in class, be a generally good person
- 2) forget finals!
- 3) get good eval

Theory 5: The End Game

- 1) slack off, don't do work
- 2) kill the finals by not sleeping for a week so that your professor is like, well, okay, I guess you actually got something out of this
- 3) get good eval

Theory 6: Odd Hours and Coping Chemically

- 1) don't sleep
- 2) consume all the caffeine
- 3) do all finals when everyone else is asleep, because then there are no distractions
- 4) immunostimulants
- 5) adaptogens

Theory 7: Misinformation

- 1) "I just won't put this in my portfolio"

HOW TO DEAL WITH SOMETHING THAT BOTHERS YOU IN/ABOUT THE OMEN:

As an Omen alumnus who still reads it for some reason, I've noticed that there once again appears to be some confusion as to how to deal with not liking something in/about The Omen. If you think the Omen is offensive or published something offensive, or it's a waste of paper, or a circle-jerk, follow these helpful steps!

1. Write about whatever bothers you. Or write about anything. Or draw silly pictures.
2. Submit it to The Omen.
3. See it published!

It's as simple as that!

(Honestly, if you think the Omen's shitty it's your own fault for not submitting anything.)

- Submitted by *Devin Morse*

hello the omen!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
i am mad!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
i sent u a story about
snails!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
and u never published
it!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
why is this!!!!!!!!!!!!
now u will never know how much
i love snails!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

unfriendly,,,,,
ANNIE BARTLO !!!!!!!!!!!

ATTN First-Year Men: Sit Down, Shut Up, And Learn

-Shelley Rosen

Now, before I get started, **Yes, I'm talking about trans men too, you're not off the hook from this.** Also, I'm mostly addressing white men. White men are nearly always the ones who do this shit I'm about to talk about, to me. I think like once or twice an asian man has done it. But like, I know that plenty of men of color do this to plenty of women of color, I've been around it happening. It's just my white privilege that they haven't done it to me.

Now, getting starting, **I'm here to rant about when men, who have way less qualified to speak on a subject, act like they know more than me, someone waaay more qualified to speak on the subject.** Honestly, this is something any privileged person has a tendency to do to people they have power over. A cis woman might act his way about pronouns or biology, but only white men have done it so absurdly as this where they act like they know more about fucking everything.

In the recent past:

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Here's the thing, you're *students*, you're here at college to *learn*, so start fucking acting like it.

I know you thought I was spouting SJW nonsense at you during orientation but guess what, I was hired to do that because I'm, in fact, smarter than you, older than you, and here to teach you, at college, which you came to, in order to learn. Not to show off how smart you were in fucking high school. To learn. From older adults who have studied this stuff for years. I'm a working adult living on my own, partially off welfare. You're a teenager. You're younger than the hit Disney classic *Mulan*. But guess what. *I remember when Mulan came out, and I saw it in theaters. I saw ads for You Got Mail on television! I watched A Bug's Life when it came out too! And Antz. Do you even remember that movie? How is some boy who wasn't even alive when I was watching Antz and my brother was saying it's a knock-off of A Bug's Life going to tell me how it's human nature for people to be racist. You can't even debate the differences between A Bug's*

Life and Antz. how can you exclude all confounding variables and conclude that racism is human nature? Have you even taken a statistics class? Do you know how science works at all? Have you even read a four-cauldian analysis of race? Do you know what that even means?

So yeah, fucking ground your knowledge in actual evidence and speak on what you've actually studied and not shit I know more about than you. I believe there could be plenty of stuff you might know more about than me, but guess what, when that stuff comes up, I know how much I know and I don't embarrass myself trying to act otherwise. I approach with inquiry and observant silent curiosity. Not privsplanations. Which is what you should do. Shut up, take notes, and fucking *learn*.

So can we talk about how Hampshire Stand-Up utilizes the acronym H/SU? And the Hampshire Student Union does so as well?

I guess both are hilarious in their own way.

#Illuminati

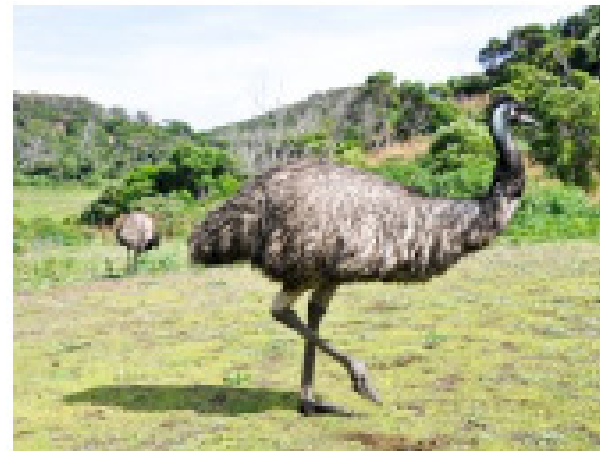
- Submitted by Xavier Torres de Janon

EMUS VS. HUMANS: THE GREAT EMU WAR OF 1932

When Meredith and his Merry Men rode out to the bush with their machine gun on the back of a moving vehicle, they were met by a large flock of emus.

Today I found out about the Great Emu War of 1932.

Emus are native to Australia, and as everyone knows, nearly everything in Australia seems capable of killing you. If the sun doesn't do it, there are still redback spiders, funnel webs, and Taipans, and others to contend with. It should come as no surprise, then, that the emu—part ostrich, part velociraptor—is also an annoyance bent on making the lives of people living in Australia miserable.



Meredith led the assault on the emus, only to find that the enemy was quick to retreat.

On 11 November 1932, Meredith and his Merry Men rode out to the bush with their machine gun on the back of a moving vehicle, they were met by a large flock of emus.

The next significant event was on 4 November. Meredith had established an ambush near a local dam, and over 1,000 emus spotted heading towards their position. This time the gunners waited until the birds were in close proximity before opening fire. The machine gun jammed after only twelve birds were killed, however, and the remainder scattered before more could be killed. No more emus were killed that day.^[2]

The machine-gunners' dreams of point blank fire into serried masses of Emus were soon dissipated. The Emu commander evidently ordered guerrilla tactics, and its unwieldy army soon split up into innumerable small units that made use of military equipment uneconomic. A crestfallen field force therefore withdrew from the combat area after about a month.

If we had a military division with the bullet-carrying capacity of these birds it would face a formidable enemy. If we had tanks.

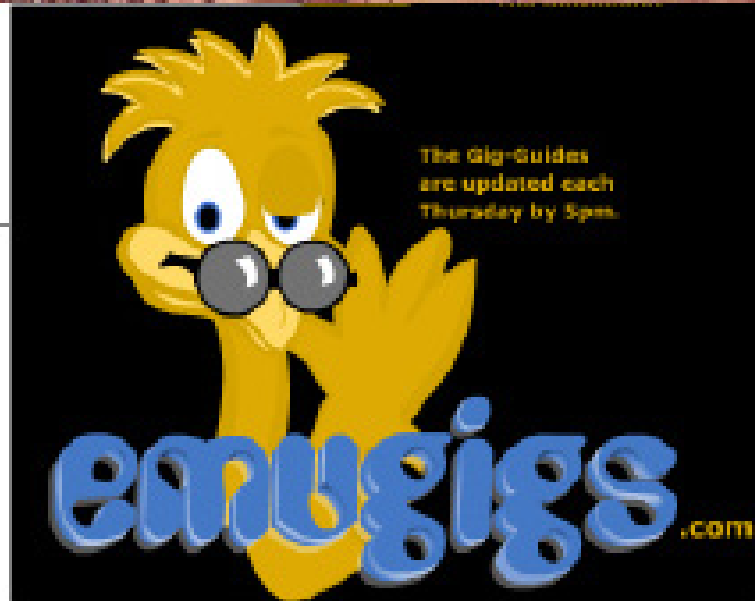
realized how fast the emus could run, they had the idea to attach a
g vehicle and chase after them



k and cunning.

00 emus were
ening fire. The gun
ore birds were sighted

mand had
of the
th. [11]



any army in the world... They can face machine guns with the invulnerability of

Beatrice Evelyn Corfman

I'm sorry this issue is out so late. I've been
being awful and will therefore try to show why
I didn't show up in this layout, and why this isn't
a color issue (but next issue will be!)

Also, apparently someone raised concerns about my last editorial to Gretchen. The specific

[illegible]

1. **Overview**

...I hope you enjoy this round. I am
...for

...the
... ..
... ..
... ..

Thursday at 2 pm until whenever the
is the sandman is dumping a bag of
h dirt on our weary meat vessels. You
to come when you can, your presence is
sincerely appreciated.

always, the Quran loves you, I love you
probably.

James Wilkey

...winners come in around 10. The following morning, a foggy November 6th, there was a rousing discussion on the subject of the men and how it works as well as the

Yak Yak which generated enough
for us to finally meet our quota.

Note, I want to thank the individual
the Hampshire community, for

may feel about our publication keeping us on our toes. We

and sterily a place for
caring carefully of her

feel about it. We listen
and will only produce

All are welcome here.

place "If I go down in history as a
" Willey

Omen 46.1.Amy Oestreicher

Amy Oestreicher is a PTSD peer-to-peer specialist, artist, author, speaker for RAINN, writer for The Huffington Post, award-winning health advocate, actress and playwright, eagerly sharing the lessons learned from trauma through her writing, performance, art and speaking. In 2012, she wrote, directed and starred in a one woman musical about her life, Gutless & Grateful, touring theatres across the country for three years, and earning rave reviews and accolades since it's BroadwayWorld Award-nominated NYC debut. As a visual artist, her art has been featured in esteemed galleries solo exhibitions, and her mixed media workshops emphasize creativity as an essential mindset.

Amy's "beautiful detour" inspired her to create the #LoveMyDetour movement, a social media campaign inspiring people to flourish because of, rather than in spite of challenges. As the Eastern Regional Recipient of the Great Comebacks Award, Amy has spoken to hundreds of WOCN nurses on behalf of ostomates nationwide. Her writings have been featured in Washington Post, On Being and more, and is a regular contributor for numerous publications including Elite Daily, The Mighty, Indie Chicks and Career Girl Daily. Her story has appeared on the TODAY Show, CBS, Cosmopolitan, Seventeen Magazine, among others.

Amy's passion for the arts as a means of healing and expression led her to devise storytelling workshops for the Transformative Language Arts Network National Conference, the Eating Recovery Center Foundation, and The League for the Advancement of New England Storytelling.

Determined to bridge the gap of communication between wellness resources on college campuses and students, Amy is currently touring college campuses with a program combining mental health advocacy, sexual assault awareness and Broadway Theatre. For information on keynote presentations, private coaching, workshops and signature talkbacks, visit amyoes.com. She's currently studying expressive arts, theatre, psychology and playwriting at Hampshire College.





The Freeze Response: How a Warrior Handles the Trauma of Sexual Assault

When I speak at colleges about my own story of sexual abuse, I never forget how difficult it was for me to even speak the words, “I was sexually abused.” It took me an even longer time to believe it, or to understand it could happen to me. And what took so much longer than I ever could have predicted was to believe that I was sexually abused...and it wasn’t my fault.

Many survivors “know” that being sexually assaulted was not their fault. Now, I’m one of them. But the question I’ve worked to answer after a decade of “healing” and “processing” what happened to me is, “Well, then why didn’t I do something?”

I had heard this dozens and dozens of times -- in my own head and with students who have opened up to me during my programs. Many victims of abuse, molestation and domestic violence often feel a guilt that they are not deserving of. For months after my voice teacher molested me, I beat myself up thinking, “Why did I do that?” wondering, “What was I thinking?” and assuming “Something must be wrong with me.”

It also took me a very long time to accept that a mentor and father figure in my life had violated our trusting relationship. I kept replaying the events that had occurred in my mind, telling myself, I must have done something wrong -- why else would he have done this? I must have instigated something... I blamed myself, convinced that no one could take advantage of me if I had not invited it.

I couldn’t shake off this “shame” I felt no matter how hard I tried to forget what had happened. The more I tried to block my memories, the more anxious and confused I became. I became a space cadet -- hardly feeling at all. It was how I protected myself. This way, I couldn’t feel the sense of loss and betrayal. I couldn’t feel the shame of still thinking this was all “my fault.” My numbness started to alarm my friends and family, to whom I insisted that nothing was wrong at all.

I kept this secret hidden inside, burning in my gut, hidden from those I loved.

The more I tried to repress what had happened, the more anxious I became, until I couldn’t handle keeping these secrets locked up so tightly. shocked, upset and as overwhelmed I was living in three worlds -- part of me functioning normally in school, keeping up my grades, and telling people I was “fine”, part of me replaying traumatic memories in my head, beating myself up for not saying no, for not running away, for not fighting back, and part of me in a numb, apathetic space of disconnect -- a place I created in my head as a survival instinct. If I created a frozen, “numb” space to exist in, I could alleviate the sense of shame I felt.

When I turned 18, I finally spilled everything to my mother. I was so afraid of what she might say or if she would judge my actions. I was embarrassed to say words like “sex” and “molestor” and “rape” out loud, let alone with my mother. My mother was as shocked I was. But she still provided me with the one solid anchor that I needed. She told me it was not my fault. No matter what I told her I had done, what he had done, what details I could remember, or what I confided in her, she reassured me with the certainty only a mother can have: it was not your fault.

Reaching out to someone I knew loved me unconditionally calmed my anxiety. Telling someone what had happened made my “dark” secret come to light. I became open to viewing my abuse in a different way -- I was willing to take some of the responsibility off of myself. My mother and I started reading about “trauma.”

I learned that in the face of trauma, you can have three responses: You can fight, flee or freeze. I could have immediately fought back against my abuser, yelling “no” or defying him in some way. I could have just ran in the other direction as fast as I could. But I was so shocked by everything that happened that I froze. Like a deer in the headlights, I couldn’t come to terms with the idea that a man that I trusted as my mentor could turn into such a monster in the blink of an eye. I

mentally left the situation, disassociated from my body, and became a passive bystander to a trauma that my body was directly involved in.

I learned that the physical sensations of “guilt” register in the same way that “shame” and “helplessness” do in your body -- so when a person feels helpless in a situation, the body automatically pairs that sensation with “guilt.” When you undergo any kind of trauma it causes a disturbance in your energy flow -- suddenly, you are unable to feel those emotions that once came so naturally at a time. My body stopped breathing the same way it used to -- a big knot of tension evolved in my chest and remained there like a cocoon. My thoughts became rigid -- frightened to wander into past memories. I put up a daze like four safe walls that protected me from being consciously present in the abuse, and that daze stayed with me with or without him. I lived in a world separate from everyone else. Reaching out not only gave me the blessing of compassion from others -- it also informed me of what I had really experienced. I realized my “numb” response to my assault, my nervous energy, sweating fits and anxiety attacks were not something to be ashamed of, but rather, a proud and victorious survival strategy.

In a wonderful book, *Waking the Tiger*, Peter Levine writes, “All mammals automatically regulate survival responses from the primitive, non-verbal brain, mediated by the autonomic nervous system. Under threat, massive amounts of energy are mobilized in readiness for self-defense via the fight, flight, and freeze responses. Once safe, animals spontaneously ‘discharge’ this excess energy through involuntary movements including shaking, trembling, and deep spontaneous breaths. This discharge process resets the autonomic nervous system, restoring equilibrium.”

Suddenly, I felt understood. Now, when I work with survivors, I help them realize that their reactions to trauma and assault are natural human reactions to be applauded. The real work comes from taking that nervous energy, which was

formerly an essential trauma survival skill, and turning it into productive healing energy -- energy that once redirected, can build a new, beautiful world for the survivor.

As a proud, once-frozen survivor, I finally see my world in color again, once I could find the courage to feel the sensations of being alive -- however uncomfortable it might have felt in moments of trauma, guilt, shame and confusion. I protected myself in a traumatic situation by becoming numb to my emotions, but now the danger was gone, my abuser had left the picture long ago. Now, the work was up to me. I told myself “it wasn’t my fault” until I believed it. And once I felt these words resonate in my body, in my soul -- I liberated myself. I had nothing to be ashamed of. And I had every right to reclaim my life, my aliveness, move on and experience the world in all of its radiant colors once again.

The biggest gift I can give to survivors I work with in my program now, is the gift of a world in color -- alive with melancholy blues, angry reds, uncertain grays, but also one of ecstatic oranges, bright yellows, and deep rich purples. Once we let ourselves feel the “bad”, we make room for the “good”.

I was sexually abused. It was not my fault. In a traumatizing situation, I froze, while others might have fled or fought back. But with time and with confiding in those I trust, I have unthawed and faced what I’ve tried to forget. And with nothing to hide, nothing to regret or redo, and everything to look forward to in the future, I’ve allowed myself to move on, claiming my voice, speaking my truth.

As survivors, the most wonderful part of healing is moving from a helpless situation into a world of our own design. Now that we’ve relied on the instinctual survival skill of freezing,” we’ve kept our spirits in tact, and now, we’re unstoppable. So what is shame? Shame is energy. As we turn that energy into energy that is rightfully ours, the energy of survival, pride and life, we become forces to be reckoned with.

How Losing My Stomach Made Me Hungry For Life

My name is Amy Oestreicher, and according to doctors, I am a “surgical disaster.” However, at 28, I feel truly blessed. I may not have a stomach, but I sure am hungry for life. It started in 2005 – a week before my senior prom. It was our second night of Passover, and my stomach started hurting. My dad said it might be gas, but he took me to the ER for an x-ray, just in case. On the way there, my cheeks actually puffed up, soon after, I collapsed, and I woke up from my coma months later. Apparently, there was a blood clot on the mesenteric artery that caused a thrombosis, and when they cut into me, my stomach actually burst to the top of the OR. Both of my lungs collapsed, I went into sepsis shock, and I needed 122 units of blood to keep me alive. At 18, I was read my last rites.

When I finally awoke from my coma months later, the doctors finally told me what was going on. I had no stomach anymore, I couldn’t eat or drink, and it was not known when or if I would ever be able to again. What do you say to that? I was shocked – I had been too sleepy to be hungry, but now that I knew what the real circumstances were, I was devastated. I was confused, like I had woken up in someone else’s life – where was I? Who was I? I remember I was once so desperate for answers that I googled “How do I find myself?”

Part of me wanted to curl up in a ball and disappear, part of me wanted to throw something. I was frustrated – I had just gotten my college acceptance letters – was I the victim of some cruel joke? My biggest goal in life was acting on the Broadway stage – and now I couldn’t even walk or talk. That’s when I made the conscious decision, that as long as this was my life right now, I would not let myself feel like a victim or hospital patient. My extremely supportive family and I found the humor and fun in everything, and made our ICU stay as pleasant as we could –

whether it was setting up bowling pins in the hallway, serenading the doctors on guitars, or even my parents sneaking me out of the ICU in my hospital gown to go shopping, my attitude always remained to make the best of whatever circumstances I was dealt.

The more alert I became, the more I remembered of my old life P.C. – pre-coma. Things like water - I missed water so much – drinking it, touching it... The first time they let me splash water on my face, I cried. It reminded me of washing my face in my old bathroom, in my old body, and I didn’t know if it would never feel the same way again. In the hospital, the highlight of my day was finally being allowed to brush my teeth, just for that soothing gargle of ice-cold water that would kill me if I ever dared swallow it. Those basic human needs I couldn’t fulfill reminded me of other primal needs I couldn’t fulfill, like being outside, feeling the cool air on my skin...I would’ve given anything to run around outside, and would often daydream about frolicking through the sprinklers just outside the hospital. But, in the ICU there were no sprinklers, no air, no windows, no food, no sign of life. Time went by SO slowly – when all you can do is lie there, and your day isn’t broken up with meals, you can go crazy from boredom. I would actually look forward to “field trips” – like when they took me downstairs - for a CT-scan. The only marking of time and sign of hope were the small triumphs – being able to sit upright in a chair for the first time, my vital signs getting a little bit better – and after months of not being able to talk, they finally took me off the ventilator – but within an hour, I talked so much that I used up all of my oxygen, so they had to put me right back on! But that’s how the journey went – things would get better, get worse, stay the same – we all just needed patience. Eventually, I didn’t need to be plugged into as many machines, so my family started taking me on high-speed rides – on my wheelchair – racing through the halls of Columbia Hospital. We’d explore all of the hidden nooks and crannies of every floor – I’m sure we weren’t supposed to be in half the places we went to - until one day, we found a beautiful outside where I got to enjoy my first breath

of fresh air in months. I remember seeing the sunset for the first time...I felt like a child being born all over again. The more glimpses I caught of the world, seeing people having lunch outside, the roaring of traffic, birds overhead, the more I wanted to be a part of it.

I was discharged a few months after I had come to, and a month after leaving, I got the lead role in a local musical – tubes, bags, and all, and still not even being allowed to have an ice cube. To cope with my hunger, I ironically found myself obsessed with food. I wanted an excuse to play with it, organize it, smell it – so I started a chocolate business which shipped all over the country, and taught myself how to cook, eventually starting a food blog. I taught nursery school, leapt across the stage in “CATS”, wrote over 30 original songs, wrote a one-woman play, started my autobiography, studied karate, yoga and dance, and starred in musicals. I needed to feel like there was still blood running through my veins – that I still was human. Without food, life felt bleak – the outside world felt threatening – watching someone open a water bottle brought tears to my eyes. To survive, I tapped into the only part of me that still felt alive – my passion and creativity. As long as I could create, it meant I was still a human on this earth.

I had this fantasy that on the day I would finally be discharged from the ICU, I would get all dressed up, have no medical devices attached to me, skip out the door, grab a burger on my way out, and waltz back into my old life. Except my waltz partner was my IV pole, and burgers don't go down so well without a digestive system. My parents felt like we all needed a “new beginning,” so they surprised me – with a new house. The house was empty – no memories of my former life, like my life before the coma never existed. Who was I now? What was this body covered in adhesive, plugged into machines, leaking out of openings I didn't even know I had? The only good thing about an empty house was an empty fridge. Thank god there was no food in the house. Until a family friend came over and brought us a dozen bagels, some whitefish salad, and a shmear.. I just

remember standing there at the counter mindlessly picking the poppyseeds off of a bagel, carving out its doughy insides with my fingernails, making that crust feel as hollow as I felt inside. And then when I had mutilated this poor mound of dough – this evil thing that threatened to kill me if I even attempted to eat it – I had no idea what to do with myself. I was hungry for a purpose. And food.

Soon, I started to put words to the anger and pain I felt – my sorrows, memories, hardships, struggles, triumphs, warrior-mentality, inspirations, milestones, thoughts, joys – I typed and typed like a madwoman four hours, in an effort to process what was happening, and to find myself through the uncertainty. That was the only way I knew to still make my mark somewhere – to prove that I was still alive, kicking, and breathing. Isolated from the entire world and from my entire former life, but still here, and still desperate to live some kind of substantial, meaningful life. I needed an outlet to just get all of my confusion, frustration, and musings out. I needed to process all that had finished and all that was still happening to me, and all that was to come in my very uncertain (scarily uncertain) future.

One day, I picked up a paint brush and my world changed. I had found a way to express things that were too complicated, painful, and overwhelming to put into words.

Whatever I do, I tend to do obsessively, and soon enough I was about to put up an art show with 70 of my paintings on display. I didn't expect much turnout, but hundreds of people showed up to see what I had done all this time, to know that I was still alive, still vital. It has been a long road, but I wouldn't be here if it was not for my art to provide me with hope, faith, courage, and an inner knowing that in the end, everything would be okay. I could feel my spirit, and that was enough for now.

I wanted spiritual fulfillment, to find God again... but I'd give him up in a heartbeat for a hunk of steak. Instead, I had what my dad would call my nightly

“pina colada cocktail” -a three liter bag of milky white IV vein-food that I would carry around in a purse for 16 hours a day, in addition to a feeding tube in a backpack. My parents were heartbroken that I couldn’t eat, so they rid the house of all food – my dad would come home from work and hide in the garage eating his eggplant parmesan. But my sense of smell at that point was superhuman, so I was definitely on to him. I missed having contact with food - what people don’t really understand is how playing with food, seeing it, smelling it, actually gave me some kind of vicarious satisfaction – in the hospital, all the kids who couldn’t eat were always the ones who wanted to play in the toy-kitchen – we’re obsessed with what we can’t have. So I was going crazy with no food in the house!

Not being able to eat was difficult, but not being able to drink – especially in the heat of summer – was just torture. After a full year of not even an ice cube, I was finally allowed to drink clear liquids – HEAVEN! 2 ounces the first week, then 4, then 6...I couldn’t wait to take my very first sip of water with the tiniest straw I could find. I took a sip and then I remembered that water didn’t have any flavor. Day after day, week after week, month after month, I waited patiently to be able to take my first big bite of anything. It wasn’t until two years later that I was finally able to eat, thanks to a 19-hour surgery and three shifts of nurses and doctors– as I was recovering, every other person came up to me and said, “oh yeah, I worked on you! I worked on you too!” (I felt like quite the celebrity.)

Life finally seemed enjoyable – I could eat and I thought any surgeries were a distant memory, I went to California on vacation, and suddenly my wound ruptured. I was immediately air-vacced to Yale Medical Center. Once again, I was told that I could not eat or drink so the wound could heal. When life felt shaky, I deferred to my rock – my paint brush and my creativity. My mother went home and gathered every scrap of fabric she could find, an old set of acrylics, and a glue gun. Every day, I worked feverishly in my hospital bed, gluing, painting, and letting my imagination set me free. Every day I would create a new work of art, a new source of hope, and

display it outside my hospital room. Soon, nurses and even mobile patients would stroll by my room to see what I had created.

When I got home, I put up another art show – “Journey Into Daylight” – a collection of 60 mixed media and acrylic paintings – 30 of them I had done at Yale. The biggest reward was being able to inspire others by sharing my message of hope and strength. My gratitude and appreciation of life – the good and the bad – motivated others to find the same positivity that I had tapped into through my paint brush and glue gun. This is why I create. I create to live, and to remind myself that I live.

Suddenly, I felt like I had a mission to share my story with the world. A message that with hope, strength, and little creativity, anything is possible. I delved through my literally thousands of typed journal pages that I kept over the years I decided to take some of my journal writings, combine both original and established songs, and make a one-woman musical of my life so far.

My show dared to explore a very personal topic – what could have been a tragedy – in a comedic, yet poignant musical. “Gutless & Grateful: A Musical Feast” was the culmination of years of struggling in the dark, and the spark in me that refused to die. It told my triumphant survival tale in a way that inspired many theatregoers and prompted them to rethink the ways they live their lives. It was such a powerful experience to share my story and have it affect so many people, that I truly felt firsthand the transformative power of theatre. To quote a line from my show:

“They say that everything happens for a reason. But that’s not always true. Sometimes, you have to make it happen. I think about my old life, and I miss it. I miss the simplicity and straightforwardness of it. I look at old pictures and I miss the innocence, the joy,

the carefreeness in my eyes. I can't be 13 again but I can be the best 26 I can. But sometimes I wonder what life would be like if this never had happened – This is not the path that I planned for myself – but does anyone's life ever work out exactly how they plan it? I was led astray, and hurt, and betrayed, and dehumanized, taken apart and put back together, but differently. But my passion never went away. I kept my hunger alive. Now I know that my role in life is still to be that same performer I always wanted to be when I was 13. But now with an even greater gift to give. A story to tell. “

I've been strong, determined, and willing to do whatever it took to stay alive. Yet I still wrestle with being grateful that this happened to me, wanting answers, wanting my old life back, being ambivalent, and just being confused. But the one thing I refuse to be is numb. I am changed by all of this, but alive nonetheless. With creativity, passion, and that little spark, anything is possible. You can find happiness in the little moments – you don't always have to be thinking about the big picture.

And just as my life took an unexpected turn as a teen, life fooled me once again. I've never had a boyfriend in my life...so I'm not exactly sure what made me create an online dating profile for myself one day. The same day I registered, I started writing novel-like letters back and forth with a man who was quirky, spunky, passionate, creative, and though he hadn't been through anything medically like I have, he reminded me oddly like myself. A week later we met, and I suddenly I felt love like I have never felt before. He reminded me of the woman I was aside from what had happened to me. Five months later, he proposed to me. I never would have guessed that I'd lose a stomach and gain a fiancé by the time I was 26!

I also didn't want to give up on my dream of pursuing my education. Better late than never, I am currently enrolled in my freshman year at Hampshire College. I would love to eventually pursue my masters in expressive therapy – I see how the arts have helped

me find my happiness and my self when nothing felt solid in my life. Helping others through their own hardships would be the biggest reward.

My mother always used to tell me that “Man plans, God laughs.” But if we can laugh along, then a plan unfolds that can be something even greater than what we anticipate. I may be a late bloomer, and my agenda as an audacious teen might have altered, but because of a beautiful detour, I see life richer than I ever would have known. As long as there's life, there's reason for hope, gratitude, and something to be happy about.

Called both a “surgical disaster” and a “medical miracle”, I don't have a body quite like I'd imagine everyone else's to be – a feminine figure with smooth flesh, voluptuous curves, effortlessly flaunting tight mini-skirts and throwing on a tee-shirt without worrying if certain medical additions are exposed – at least, that's how I thought everyone felt about their body.

At 18 years old, I was sucked into an alternate universe of IVs, CT-scans, cutting apart and putting back together, having my body manipulated like medical marionette. Ten years later, it's hard to remember what my body looked like before the scars, ostomy bags, and IVs became a mainstay in my physical life. I don't remember what it felt like to sleep on my stomach, or to jump in the pool fearlessly. But in exchange, I've learned things about my body – the vessel for the vitality that flows within me – that I will never forget.



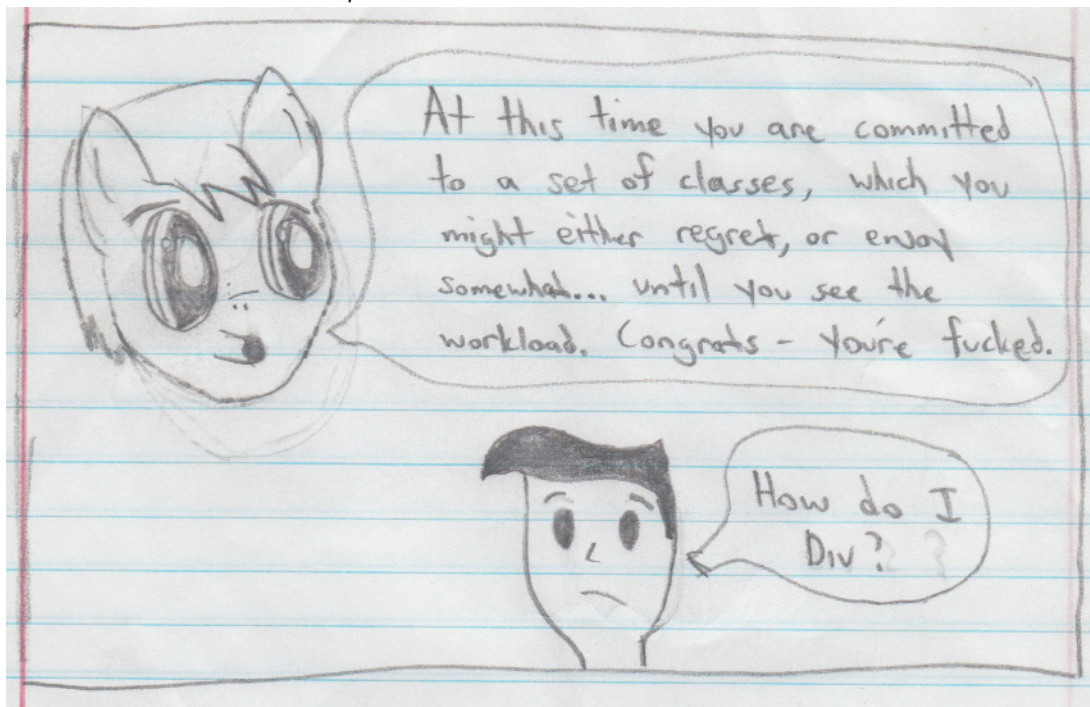




SECTION

FINALE

^ Bryan Prieto



Rowan Lupton v



WAR HEADS

5
submitted by Sairon Boesjes

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 2 cookies (29g)
Servings Per Container about 15

Amount Per Serving

Calories 140 Calories from Fat 60

% Daily Value*

Total Fat 7g	11%
Saturated Fat 2g	10%
Trans Fat 0g	
Polyunsaturated Fat 1g	
Monounsaturated Fat 3g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 95mg	4%
Potassium 40mg	1%
Total Carbohydrate 21g	7%
Dietary Fiber Less than 1g	3%
Sugars 13g	
Protein Less than 1g	

Vitamin A 0% • Vitamin C 0%
Calcium 0% • Iron 4%

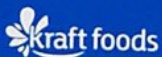
*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:

	Calories:	2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than	65g	80g
Sat Fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Potassium		3,500mg	3,500mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g

INGREDIENTS: SUGAR, UNBLEACHED ENRICHED FLOUR (WHEAT FLOUR, NIACIN, REDUCED IRON, THIAMINE MONONITRATE (VITAMIN B1), RIBOFLAVIN (VITAMIN B2), FOLIC ACID), HIGH OLEIC CANOLA OIL/PALM OIL, COCOA (PROCESSED WITH ALKALI), HIGH FRUCTOSE CORN SYRUP, CORNSTARCH, LEAVENING (BAKING SODA AND/OR CALCIUM PHOSPHATE), SALT, SOY LECITHIN, VANILLIN - AN ARTIFICIAL FLAVOR, CHOCOLATE.

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